ST MARTIN **2016 February 17** (Flowers Type of 2016) (8ea SS/1)
Each SS has floral images from various prints by artist Maria Sibylla Merian (1647–1717) in the margins that have not been identified. See Vol. 67(1) p.18.

152	500c	Corn Cockle, *Agrostemma githago*	Caryophyllaceae	Fl A SS
153	500c	Crimson Columbine, *Aquilegia formosa*	Ranunculaceae	Fl A SS
154	500c	Desert Bearpoppy, *Arctomecon merriamii*	Papaveraceae	Fl A SS
155	500c	White Marsh Marigold, *Caltha leptosepala*	Ranunculaceae	Fl A SS
156	500c	Greater Celandine, *Chelidonium majus*	Papaveraceae	Fl A SS
157	500c	Hairy Clematis, *Clematis hirsutissima*	Ranunculaceae	Fl A SS
158	500c	Virgin's Bower, *Clematis ligusticifolia*	Ranunculaceae	Fl A SS
159	500c	Woodbine, *Clematis virginiana*	Ranunculaceae	Fl A SS

TRINIDAD & TOBAGO **2018** (Surcharges)

935	$2	Ratchet, *Nopalea cochenillifera* (Sc#750 surch)	Cactaceae	V A

CACTUS FLOWERS

On 15 February 2019, at the AmeriStamp Expo in Mesa, Arizona, the US Postal Service and American Philatelic Society held an official First Day of Issue ceremony for the Cactus Flowers booklet of stamps. The event took place in the Mesa Convention Center theater starting at 11:00 AM.

L to R: John P. Schaefer, Kenneth Schutz, John DiPeri, Scott English, William Gicker

William J. Gicker, Acting Director of Stamp Services for the USPS, served as Master of Ceremonies.

Following the presentation of Colors by the Mesa Police Honor Guard and the singing of the National Anthem by students for Arcadia High School, Scoot English, Executive Director of the APS, made opening remarks.

John DiPeri, Operations & Support Manager for the USPS Western Area, dedicated and unveiled the stamp designs with the assistance of the other noted guests. The ten colorful designs are based on actual photographs by Dr. John P. Schaefer.

Following the unveiling, Kenneth Schutz, the Dr. William Huizingh Executive Director of the Desert Botanical Garden, offered remarks on the subjects of the stamp designs including how well the images of the blossoms had been captured. He included a plea for the conservation of these plants, many of which are endangered due to loss of habitat and illegal harvesting.

The final speaker was Dr. John P. Schaefer, the photographer whose designs were used for the stamp images. Dr. Schaefer is a former professor of photography and President Emeritus of the University of Arizona. He and Ansel Adams founded the Center for Creative Photography at the University of Arizona. Additionally, he helped to organize the Tucson Audubon Society and found the Nature Conservancy in Arizona and is the author of three best-selling books on photographic techniques.

Despite all these significant accomplishments, he told the attendees that having his photographs selected for these stamps was the highlight of his life, since these images will travel all around the world and display the beauty of these exceptional plants.